(ख) महाराष्ट्र सरकार ने 30,000 मी० टन खाद्य तेल के आबंटन का अनुरोध किया है। इस समय, विदेशी मुद्रा संबंधी गंभीर कठिनाइयों के कारण खाद्य तेलों का आयात स्थगित कर दिया गया है। सरकार आयात पुनः आरंभ किए जाने पर राज्यों/संघ राज्य क्षेत्रों को जिनमें महाराष्ट्र शामिल है, खाद्य तेल का आबंटन करेगी।

Decline in industrial output

1554. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Hindustan Times dated 27th August, 1991 captioned "Sharp decline in industrial output";

(b) if so, the details thereof and what is the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether this decline is trend based or due to deep structural deficiencies; and

(d) what steps Government are taking to rectify this substantive slump?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P. J. KURIEN): (a) to (d) According to the Index of Industrial Production compiled by Central Statistical Organisation, the rate of growth during April-May, 1991 was (—) 0.3 per cent as gainst 12.9 per cent in the corresponding period of last year.

The decline in the rate of growth during April-May, 1991 was due to several factors. In some sectors, this was due to a shortage of raw materials, particularly imported raw materials, because of foreign exchange constraints. International price rises also contributed to significant increases in the domestic prices of some raw malerials. In some other sectors. the fall in growth rates may be attributed to the plateauing of demand after extremely high growth rates in previous years. Changes in duty structure also contributed to such demand constraints. The imposition of some specific import restrictions due to balance of payments considerations contributed to a slow down in the growth in some sectors. Other sectors were also affected by infrastructural constraints such as power and coal shortages, in some areas.

Government has recently come out with a Statement on Industrial Policy in July, 1991. The major objectives of the new policy package are to build on the gains already made, correct the distortions or weaknesses that may have crept in, maintain a sustained growth in productivity and gainful employment and attain international competitiveness. All sectors of indistries whether small, medium, or large, belonging to the public, private or cooperative sector will be encouraged to grow and improve on their past performance.

Raw material for paper Mills

1555. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Governments consideration to ensure that paper mills will not be allowed to draw bamboo and timber from State-owned forests;

(b) whether any steps have been taken in this direction;

(c) what measures have been taken to ensure that paper mills locate their own raw material;

(d) if not, the reasons for subsidising large paper mills on State-owned forests;

(e) whether any existing paper mills have applied for expansion of their capacity; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the details of such applications for expansion of existing capacity as on date?